

GROWTH OF GERMAN INFLUENCE

Iranian government in Teheran was neither willing nor able to do anything to restore order and respect for law. Thus, even Russo-British intimidation of the Iranian cabinet and their outward diplomatic successes in Teheran were of little value to the Allies. The chief aim of their policy was to keep Iran strictly neutral and free of enemy military activities. This end was not attained. To add to their difficulties, the only organized military force in Iran—the gendarmerie—turned pro-German and refused to obey government orders. Its Swedish officers felt an affinity with the cause of Germany despite a denunciation of their attitude by the strictly neutral Stockholm government. Having offered their services to Prince von Reuss, the gendarmes co-operated with Wassmuss and liberally helped themselves to the funds of the captured branch of the Imperial Bank of Iran in Shiraz. All in all, order in Iran could be maintained only in the areas that were subject to either Russian or British military occupation. This was not what the Allies desired, for it diverted forces essential in other theaters.

Despite these successes, the Germans failed to fulfill their military and political objectives. Iran neither declared war on the Allies, nor was she opened for further advance to India. Yet German intrigue and diversion constituted a major headache to Russia and Britain and interfered with the efficacy with which the Mesopotamian campaign was prosecuted. It intensified anti-Russian and anti-British feelings in the country and left the seed for future German influence.

GERMAN INFLUENCE IN IRAN AFTER WORLD WAR I

The end of the war saw a momentary eclipse of German influence.

By the middle twenties, however, it was gradually revived. Step by step the Weimar Republic regained the lost position of Imperial Germany and prepared the ground for the further expansion of the Nazi period. The characteristic feature of this penetration was the tendency to gain a foothold in the field of communications. One is tempted to see a sort of meticulous method or master plan pursued by Germany in the Middle East. This plan, which will be elaborated more fully below, may be briefly described in the following manner: first, prepare the way by dominating the transport system; second, use